



**Office of the United States Attorney
District of Arizona**

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Thursday, March 10, 2005

For Information Contact Public Affairs

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FORMER BORDER PATROL AGENT INDICTED FOR HARBORING AN ILLEGAL ALIEN

TUCSON, Ariz. -- A federal grand jury here returned a one-count indictment on March 9, 2005 against Christopher E. Bemis, 24, formerly of Sierra Vista, Ariz. The indictment alleges that Bemis harbored a female illegal alien from June, 2004 to February 2, 2005 while an employee of the U.S. Border Patrol. Bemis surrendered to the Office of the Inspector General on February 9, 2005, and was released on his own recognizance. His arraignment is scheduled for Thursday, March 17, 2005 at 11:00 a.m. in Tucson federal court.

The federal indictment charges Bemis with violating Title 8 U.S. Code, Section 1324 (a)(1)(A)(iii). A conviction for 1324(a)(1)(A)(iii) under the circumstances alleged in the indictment carries a maximum penalty of five years in prison, a \$250,000 fine or both.

An indictment is simply the method by which a person is charged with criminal activity and raises no inference of guilt. An individual is presumed innocent until competent evidence is presented to a jury that establishes guilt beyond a reasonable doubt.

The investigation preceding the indictment was conducted by the Office of the Inspector General for the Department of Homeland Security.

The prosecution is being handled by Cynthia R. Wood, Assistant U.S. Attorney, District of Arizona, Tucson, Ariz.

CASE NUMBER: CR-05-0453-TUC

RELEASE NUMBER: 2005-040

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